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THE CRAYON.

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[WHOLE NO. XLVII.]

THE CREED OF ART.

We are not of the class who revere Art unduly, or attribute to it the mystic force and worth of past ages. It has no functions in common with those creeds and forms which, be they right or wrong, too often hide the essential nature of Religion from human intellect. If made the minister to any object less than the elevation of the human soul to its ideal state, an end to which Religion itself is only a means, it is degraded from its true position. It exists as an eternally enduring form of that truth which is in its essence the same, let its form be what it will. That series of principles and system of morality which, applied to our relations to the Supreme Intelligence, constitute Religion—or to the ends of government, form the true political system, when applied to Nature, become Art. And these stand side by side, mutually independent in so far that a man may pursue either without the recognition of the others; but, again, mutually dependent in so far that no man can fully possess and comprehend either without knowing the essential unity between the three. They stand side by side, not super-imposed, and they differ in worthiness, not as being adjuncts the one to another, but as being devoted, one to Deity, another to Fellow-man, and the other to Nature, yet all for our use and ultimate perfection. The mere Artist whose regards go no deeper than his forms and appearances, is not different from the Politician for politics' sake, or the Christian for the creed's sake; but that one who, in either of those forms of Truth, sees the hope of the world and labors at its realization for the good of humanity, is not only Artist or Politician, but also a Man in the high and noble sense of the word.

The creed of Art is, therefore, the parallel of that of the true religion, the reverence of God in one case becoming reverence of Nature in another, and the same spirit of Love being the vitality of both. He, who from his heart loves Nature, reverences her slightest teaching, and will never wander into falsehood or blasphemous substitution of his own glory for that of his great Teacher. Art, to him, has higher aims than enloutment or self-exaltation; and he dwells in the outer world a lover, a worshipper of the true and the beautiful, and is for ever a missionary of the Ideal, content with that life which permits him to follow with freedom his purposes; and most happy when he sees most fully conveyed to the world the message his own spirit has been impressed with, and the happiness he

has found in his worship of Nature. *This is the Artist*, without the distinction of Intellect which the world is so fond of imposing as the necessary condition to success; the essential distinction being that of truth—not of greatness. The first thing is to be an Artist; if, beside, one is great, there is additional means for success—but the position is no more obtained by power of mind, than religion is. The most perfect Artist is the one most entirely devoted to the truth and beauty of Art; but if, from the imperfect constitution of his mental organization, his range of perception is partial, his sphere of influence is accordingly circumscribed. It is not necessary to awe the world by his mighty grasp of thought or display of imagination, but it is necessary to love Nature in some form so earnestly and self-forgetfully that, by the light which that love brings, he may realize all that she has to say to him; and that so his work, bearing the impress of his devotion, shall awaken the respondent feeling in those who see it. The conditions which we demand of the Christian, are those which we should demand of the Artist—Humility, Love, and Sincerity; not Power, or Vanity, or Pride.

The precepts of Christ would form, if properly applied, a body of laws for Art fulfilling all the demands of its widest range, and the Christian virtues, if made its excellences, would lead to a result which would dim all its past achievements. It has been said that Christianity has never been fully brought into practice yet, and we are well assured that the grand principles of Art are as far from being completely applied as those of Religion. We know, too, that the very assertion of those principles will be met by the large majority of men with a sneer or an exclamation of "twaddle!" but a sneer or an expression of contempt does not change the character of a truth—it stands there still, profiting those who accept it, and still, as of old—"to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness." The very existence of truth in Art is ignored by that critical public which judges of works not by their attainment of the ends of Art, but by their display of the means of it—by their greatness, rather than the justice and value of their results—the Goliath goes out, as ever, with shouts, while the humble slinger walks in the fear and distrust of all who should side with him. In the clangor and glistening of armor, men forget to look to the edge of the sword, or the purpose that wings the shaft. When they have learned

to judge justly, and honor most the man who honors most his Creator, we shall see a new era not only in Art but in Religion,—and men will no longer look at the Artist, but through him, as a former letter of Ruskin's suggests, as a telescope, valuable, first of all, for its clearness—then, if clear, according to its strength.

Nor does this view of Art detract at all from the importance of Religion to the world. The man who has learned and put in use one truth, has fitted himself more completely to see another; and all that contributes to complete and perfect us mentally and spiritually, assists Religion in its final function. The reverence of Nature is the first step to the reverence of Nature's God, and the love which Art requires is the elder sister of that which Religion demands. To the perfect man many things are necessary, and none more necessary than others. Religion, Art, Science, produce this complex result which we are, and, whatever may be their relative importance in that compound, there is no comparison in necessity—no less or greater. No whole can be perfect while the least member is omitted.

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF AN ARTIST.

BY JACK TUPPER.

NO. III.

THE personal allusions which follow, if not otherwise interesting, seem somewhat typical of a class of Instructors; and, as such, are given to the reader, who will observe also how, mixed up with these, there appears (for the first time) a consciousness, or rather indirect avowal, on the part of the Diarist, that he might be writing not merely for himself; a whispered wind of remote publication, such as often stirs the feathers of epistolary pens, sometimes raising them a little off the earth. J. T.

To forget this tall artist and temporary master of mine, were not easy; things pleasant or unpleasant are easily remembered, and he was one of these.

It is a shame to write down the foibles of any one; and most, of one we dislike; but how fulfill the compact with my father, and omit or burke the particulars that influenced my early opinions and practice? I must—must look at him—all but his name!

He had a nasty trick of wetting my crayon in his mouth, when he snatched it from me to give, what he called "spirit to my touch." He wetted it severely, too, and insisted upon my doing so after him. He was a fluent orator, though a nasal one. He was a fluent orator, though a nasal one. He poured in reinforcements of knowledge so fast and vehemently, that one doctrine displaced another. I tried to hold what I thought good, but the next shot always dislodged it. His personal experiences were more at leisure, however; continuous, but less overlapped. He had a great notion that rapid execution was the sign manual

of genius; hands, moreover, were his favorite object of study. "Now," said he, "I can get through from three to four hands in a day; and I remember when one was more than I could manage." Ha! thought I, and what a genius were he who could draw a dozen at that time! Sir Martin Archer Shee, President of the Royal Academy, to my mind represented the summit of Art. He, I conjectured, might do it. Madras and Eastlake might manage nine each; Lee, being a landscape painter, not more than seven. And as I applied this meteyard of genius to the artistic stature of masters long dead, some of them rose through the mists of antiquity to at least "sixteen hands;"—noble animals who gallop down to posterity like that Trojan one bred by Epheus! If I reviewed my master, and punned upon him, I was dissatisfied with this *handy* test of his which showed me to my patron too, too like an ass—it was so matter-of-fact and unmistakable, when, at the end of the week, I could only show *two*—*six* copies of each cast was my sentence—working, with the watch on the table, against time!

Turbulent, warlike times, I remember them—hebdomadal protests against temporalities, as I marched up, single-handed, in the teeth of both master and patron. Hot persecution on the one side; and silent, sullen reitency on the other. Talk of happy school-days! My good friend, Gunter, you talked nonsense last night. You did not, my honored senior, talk sense, when you said those days were happy. That "soft velvet" on the hills—you pointed to it coming home—that "couch of down spread by nature for the sheep—for young scapegraces—for you once—you could roll in it—and those were happy days!" That "soft velvet" was—but you forget, you are asleep and dreaming of stocks—was veritable furze, sir, which could have run into your shins sharp enough for swearing (had you traversed it), which you forget, and I remember—the thorns yet sticking in mine. You returned from sea at one and twenty; you had been a scape-grace; but I *was not*, then, to ask you, when reinstated in the counting-house, whether behind the desk was not happier than before the mast. The question was not asked, therefore hangs; but you never went to sea again, that's certain. Now, I remember I was in receipt of all tyrannous persecution; and one bitter mockery was a conviction, in my seniors, of my "boyish happiness,"—a bitter mockery no longer, but only an error in judgment; and twenty years hence—when the furzes shall have changed into velvet—no error in judgment, but a truth, the result of experience. Mary finishes Ivanhoe, and gives a look of cool, contemplative observation, as if I were a shaven lion, or a clawless cat. I am sadly wanting in hawker. Those were times. Mary would prefer sojourning at Front de Boeuf's Castle to staying at Tunbridge Wells. Nay, I myself am lingering over old reminiscences, indifferent to the business of to-day;—the business of to-day not yet entered in my diary! It is late, too, the fire out. I think I must be writing six hours. This must—must be resumed hereafter; and I must post up the Day-Book.

Notwithstanding this virtuous resolution of the Diarist, to "post up his Day-Book," as he calls it—a bold, business metaphor, not quite legitimately worded—we

shall give both Reminiscences and Diary distinct, and as integral in form as possible. Wherefore what follows of the former, although jotted between various entries of the latter, will be presented connectively, leaving both the Reminiscences and Diary unique.

J. T.

My father may be right; I know not! but it seems such a loss of time, this jotting of diurnal events, this reiteration of nothings. There is interest, on the other hand, in recalling one's early career. We stand away from the past at an easy angle of forty-five degrees; see the horizon, dim indeed, but beautifully azure; difficult hills, but their abruptness softened; headlands in mist, or rain it may be, but far off;—there are chasms, but we do not look down; we see the bridges that span them; there is some one crossing and crossing; we see him in slumberous meadows, at the side of lakes, and by rivers; he has climbed up the poplars, comes up the back of a hill, rides on the long white road. You lose him, and he will reappear: he is safe between you and the horizon. Perhaps a sound shall direct you—a bird's song—he paces in the alleys; a bee's hum—he sleeps in the arbor; a splash—he reads by the fountains; a gate's jar—he enters the grange; a whisper—he is with whom—you know her? Now observe that he is in the plane of the picture, if he outstep that he is ordinary; if you turn your head he is dirt; keep him within forty-five degrees! Vanity may have something to do with it; it is a novel with one's self for the hero, and I feel in resuming this retrospect as if I were doing something for others; whereas my *Diary* is my milk-score, which the milkman receipts and has done with.

Note.—Has not the writer here, unconsciously, told us why Painters, Sculptors, and Poets, for the most part, lay their scenes in past ages? That this choice of subject or of time was the right one, in the opinion of the Diarist, when he wrote this (a little after his admission into the Royal Academy), is sufficiently obvious (to the collator of the manuscripts), not merely from his distaste for the "jotting of diurnal events," but, from actual remarks on the subject. Whether this opinion, however, remained firm, or whether he subsequently preferred his own time and scenes, and came to take interest in "diurnal jottings," will (with this note introduced as a marker) duly appear in the sequel.

J. T.

Retrospect Continued.

One thing I must do while my memory is yet green on the subject. I must predicate, faithfully and fairly, the veritable position of the Boy; first of the Boy-anything; then of the Boy-artist. "Happy school-days! happy boyhood!" 'tis the hackneyed delusion of age. Young men, too, turn evidence, ignoring their boy-patience, and affirm that "all urchins are happy." Painters, on the contrary, are always boys; they repudiate no part of life; how should they, embracing all nature? Pictures of fields and flowers, driven through the doors of sense on keen sunbeams, hang round the walls for ever: witnessing eternally to bygone pleasure: witnessing eternally to bygone pain. The boy loves the sunshine more than the man does, and feels more its deprivation; whilst men, who heed it little themselves, scruple not to bar him from it. Now men, having mutual sympathies, work, mainly, for their mutual enjoyment. Bumble kicks the marbles out of the court, whilst billiard-balls rattle

above. Grass-hopper fields are turned into tea-gardens, and woods into railway-sleepers. I am a boy still, with little help from men therefore; grumble at the railways and invasion of the country. But what is that to the question?

"What is that to the question?" asks the reader; and, at first, we asked the same, and thought the allusion incomprehensible. Under these words, the page is a universal blot, or smearer rather. In this smear are discernible aëronic phantom-sketches of artists, armed with mahl-sticks, stretching-frames, and palette-knives, encountering merchants, lawyers, and mathematicians, armed with ledgers, blue-bags, and compasses; the artists having the worse. But as the ink-smear obliterated these, these obliterated something else. It was writing; and, after much chemistry and holding to the light, we decipher some of it thus:—"Artist * * * little help from men * * * (clearer). The artist's church is not the world's church. The artist must pay his rates, and must grumble. The boy-artist is also a dissenter. If he grumbles, he gets rated twice." The rest is illegible. This seems the case with the Boy-artist, proposed to be, but never discussed by our Diarist, unless inferentially in his early troubles; and perhaps obliterated because of the pun.

J. T.

Retrospect Continued.

What pain of rheumatism, or of gout, loss of friends or of money, equals persecution? Who knows persecution but a boy? Who so unfairly judged, so unequally rewarded, as he who neither comprehended the policy of ratan, nor the prohibition on birds' nests—he who knew Greek was Al Thumbeerow, Latin slow torture, and Al Gebra an infernal machine; who liked not kicks, nor bumps; knew they were unpleasant to bear without fighting, and was not sure of justice when he did bear them. "Faults on both sides?" Did he believe in that decision? and the bumps were all on *one*! Did he doubt the capacity of that omniscient intellect which unravelled his mathematics, to distinguish the right from the wrong—the simple "plus" from the minus? and doubting not the ability to render justice, could he doubt that withholding it was cruel? Did he see injustice, oppression in high places, and servile treachery in low (with the mind of a boy, but the head of a man), and not realize the conditions of a serf in the feudal time; a serf to whom necessary evils of state looked like oppression—he was so far removed from the ruler. For *suffering* means *oppression*, in childhood; and has not that age, like the feudal age, left us with an extended charity, and some odd notions about "good old times?"

Truly, then, every man's hand was against me! I went into the woods and sang. A song I had learned in the nursery found its way with misanthropical relish.

Hazel, and bramble, and oak;
And the mosses grow underneath the tree;
Listen, ye little birds, to me;
Who but the Ouzle spoke?

Hearken to the Ouzle, but sing!
There is a mouse in the grass!
He sings half like a bird—alas!
Singing, 'tis a pleasant thing!

"The Ouzle does nothing but crow!"
And yet ye have listened to him.
Did the Robin not stand on his foot so slim,
To hearken, a while ago?

O ye shall listen to me!
For the mouse and the Ouzle have finished
their song,
And I am not heard by the turbulent throng
That groan like the laboring sea.

This was one of the few nursery songs I remembered. It was always a mystery; yet something, there was, left it in my ear. Poetry reveals itself at seasons, and but for this Timoniac visit to the woods, I might never have apprehended how the black-bird could be said to crow. Now it was clear. I fancied how such men as I had left—such critics—would treat a poet who should shout out his Ouzle, and cease suddenly. Yes, “the Ouzle did nothing but crow.” Heroical irony! a bleak wind of satire, blown witheringly on the whole human family. “Look at this sylvan family: contrast with our human, where little growths are stifled and outgrown, and the songsters,” I said, “hooted down.” “Hazel, and Bramble, and Oak.” Does the kernel sneer at the berry—does the oak tree trample out the moss? The birds sing each in turn, or in chorus; and none screams down another. The sun is feeding all things, mosses redden in gold, honey oozes through the leaves, and still I talk, alone, in these places, and sleep as sound as then. But I woke to know a trouble. Friends were at home to tea: drawings and models would be expected. The sun stooped lower and lower, and now looked under the wood. I rose as the great glare came in through the elms: there were a hundred golden columns. After shuffling, ankle deep in leaves, down a strange path, chosen, as the night was closing, to save ground, and secretly wishing at the same time to lose myself, I came to a great hollow on my left. There ferns were asleep, and mist rising over them. I trod down the cold silence to the bottom—a land of white toad-stools!

When I got home it was a troublesome evening; the ladies talking artistic and sentimental; making me show off my sketches, and pulling me, because I was a boy! Most of them “drew a little” themselves, and listened approvingly as my mother descanted and enlarged upon the amazing rapidity of my master. I heard all with sore misgiving, for I expected a split with that gentleman; and knew how soon my mother’s note would change so soon as he pronounced me no genius. My mother had always a taste for art, certainly a liking for it; recognized my likenesses invariably; praised me, and praises me now. The Bar-prises (the “terrible”) were present. The phraseology I treasured that evening was multifarious and novel. It was of “dashing outcides,” “hitting off likenesses,” “embodying conceptions,” “laying in landscapes,” “penning sonnets,” “throwing off stanzas.” Each speaker, too, naming some one, her friend, who held, it seemed, exclusive monopoly in each particular talent. I dreamed all night of a churchyard of toad-stools sacred to the memory of rotting leaves. They sprang up under foot faster than my master drew hands; they changed into red-hot elms; they faded into grey ferns; and sooner than I could begin to sketch them, bugles clang, and galloped in a score of demons attired like ladies, who leaped over me, sketching stool and all, in a continuous fountain of horses,

forbidding flight, and imposing breathless night-mare, till I waked—breathless. I gulped my breakfast that morning, put my watch on the table, and executed two feet, from plaster casts, in four hours. I could no longer resist the ordeal of speed. It was tried now, and I was satisfied. I never repeated the experiment.

A little after this (I was not fifteen) came the split I had anticipated. My patron looked sideways, as he told me there was an infinite field of study at the British Museum—open to everybody. The original antiques there were superior to any casts he could furnish me with. They were accessible to all. And—he should, at all times, be happy to see me—I looked at the time-piece on the mantel, and wondered at what time that would be; for I did not believe him. He paused; and I remember feeling that a moment’s hesitation, on my part, would call for that explanation which my pride dreaded. I remember it as well as yesterday; and likewise feeling surprised at the impossibility and address which enabled me to change the subject on the instant, and to regret the late indisposition of Mrs. P., hoping that the fire near them had neither alarmed nor affected her seriously. I was a diplomatist for five minutes; could have talked about universal suffrage; did “good morning” inscrutably, presented an impassive exterior to the footman; and was not unrolled till, at the middle of Curzon street, destiny exposed my mummyship to the rain, and I stood up under a doorway. I looked up at the sky and laughed; a miserable, dirty, ragged blanket, patched with dirt! I was not at all impatient; on the contrary, perfectly satisfied, I had escaped. The weather understood me, and I it. Useless wasting sunshine on days of slavery! This was the last day of it; let it pour till sunset! I enjoyed the whole of it; made a diversion in the direction of the British Museum, and got home thoroughly drenched.

I believe I told my story with sufficient apathy to disgust my family, and went to bed grandly misanthropic. A nucleus of comfort was within me, though; and I could not sleep for thinking. My walk to the Museum had been productive. It was a public day, and two or three students were at work. One of these (he was copying a bust of Antinous) told me the magical secret: “Henry Howard, Esq., R.A.; don’t forget R.A.; would give me an introduction, if I wrote to him.” Was he related to “Belted Will,” or the “Philanthropist”? And as I inclined to one opinion or the other, I turned round and looked at the window. The sun rose at last. I got up weak, and with a cold. I wrote: took the letter myself (I could not wait post). It was nine o’clock at Newman street when the door opened. There was some one (beyond the footman) at the end of the passage, in a dressing-gown; not “Belted Will,” but the Philanthropist; he led me in; wrote, whilst I worshipped his canvas, then smiled me out, with a letter—he was a great smile. I was enrolled in the books of the Museum before 10 A.M. That day I outlined a statue, known as the Dancing Faun. I went home strangely buoyant; had no sleep that night, and, next day, the Scarlet Fever.

L'ORCO.

A LEGEND OF VENICE.

Translated for THE CRAYON from the French of Madame Dudevant.

We were as usual assembled under the arbor: the evening was stormy, the air heavy, and the sky draped in black clouds, now and then illuminated by flashes of lightning. A melancholy silence had settled upon us: it appeared as if the sadness of the atmosphere had penetrated to our hearts: we felt involuntarily disposed to tears. Beppa, especially, seemed to be given up to mournful thoughts, and in vain did the abbé, who dreaded the tendency of our dispositions, try repeatedly and in every way to revive the, usually, so marked gaiety of our friend. Neither questions, pleasantries, nor prayers, could withdraw her from her reverie; with eyes fixed upon the sky, and her fingers lightly touching the trembling strings of her guitar, she seemed to have lost consciousness of what was passing around her, and to be occupied only with the plaintive tones of her instrument, and with the drifting of the changeable clouds. The good Panorio, somewhat discouraged by the bad result of his efforts, turned and addressed himself to me.

“Well now,” said he, “dear Zorzi, do you try upon our sweet capricious friend the power of your friendship. There is between you two a kind of magnetic sympathy that will make your influence more effective than my own, and the sound of your voice will draw her out of this deep abstraction.”

“That magnetic sympathy which you allude to, dear abbé,” I replied, “comes from the identity of our feeling. We have suffered alike, and thought the same thoughts, and we understand ourselves well enough, she and I, to know what train of ideas recalls us ever to outward circumstances. I will wager that I can divine, if not the object, at least the nature of her reveries.”

And turning to Beppa:

“Dearest,” said I gently, “of which of our sisters art thou thinking?”

“Of the most beautiful,” she replied without moving, “of the proudest—of the most unfortunate.”

“When did she die?” I asked. “becoming already interested in one who lived in the memory of my noble friend, and longing to associate myself by my condolence with a career that could not be unknown to me.”

“She died towards the close of the past winter, the night of the masked ball given at the Servilio palace. She had borne up against many sorrows—she had come off victorious over many dangers—she had suffered terrible agony without flinching—and she departed suddenly, leaving no trace, as if she had been swept off by the lightning. Everybody here was more or less acquainted with her, but none knew her as I did, because no one loved her so well, and she only revealed herself according as she was beloved. Some do not believe in her death, notwithstanding she has not been seen since the night I speak of. They say it was a frequent occurrence with her thus to disappear for a long time, and then again to reappear. But for myself, I am sure she will return no more, and that her place